

INTRODUCTION

as a signal for a general oriental revolution failed. Yet it would be a mistake to underrate its significance. Moscow, by summoning this meeting, revealed its far-reaching ambitions in Asia and indicated the tactics which it was determined to employ.

IRAN IN COMMUNIST STRATEGY AND TACTICS

The incident of the lonely voice from the Iranian group during the closing stage of the Congress was in its own way symbolical. Iran had had sufficient experience with Russian imperialism in the past not to be too easily reconciled to her northern neighbor upon the change of government in Moscow. At the very time of the Congress Iran experienced a new manifestation of the Russian drive to the south. Soviet troops were stationed in Iran's Caspian provinces and were lending active support there to the revolutionary movement. Even the Iranian delegation at the Congress was not entirely voluntary. Under the combined pressure of the Iranian Communist party and the Red Army, some intellectuals from the north of Iran were compulsorily recruited to go to Baku. On the other hand, one should not ignore the fact that the Iranian delegation was the second largest at the Congress (192 delegates) and even larger than the notoriously pro-Communist Armenian group (157 delegates). It was surpassed in number only by the Turkish delegation (235). During the Congress two Iranian Communist representatives were particularly active: Haidar Khan (Gaydarkhanov), who was elected to the Presidium, and Sultan-zadeh. Both were elected to the Council of Action and Propaganda on behalf of the Communist faction. The large number of Iranians at the Congress, the election of their representatives to the leading bodies, and the

frequent references to Iran in the speeches of Zinoviev, Kun, and Radek were not a mere accident. Iran had an important place in the strategy of oriental revolution elaborated in Moscow. As early as 1918 the Bolshevik writer K. Troyanovsky assigned a precise role to Iran in his *Vostok i Revolutsia*:

The importance of Persia for the creation of the Oriental International is considerable. If, however, the primary task of Persia is to constitute the natural "basin" for the movement of political emancipation of Central Asia, it is necessary that this basin be freed of the sediment and waste which ac-